
Bay Delta Conservation Plan

DRAFT Public Outreach Plan

Discussion

This document is written to serve as the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) Steering Committee's (SC's) work plan to conduct public outreach as described in the BDCP Planning Agreement. The outlined approach assumes that the BDCP NEPA/CEQA process will be composed of a single consolidated NEPA/CEQA document and a single public outreach effort that will satisfy NEPA/CEQA and the requirements of the NCCPA. Should this assumption be modified as the planning process proceeds, this public outreach plan may need to be adjusted accordingly.

Purpose of the BDCP

The purpose of the BDCP is to provide for the conservation of the delta smelt and other covered species within the planning area; to protect and restore certain aquatic, riparian, and associated terrestrial natural communities that support these covered species; and to provide for and restore water quality, water supplies and ecosystem health within a stable regulatory framework.

Public Outreach Goal

Implement an outreach program that sustains an open and transparent process; meets NCCPA, CEQA, and NEPA requirements; raises awareness; improves mutual understanding; builds trust; identifies issues; and sustains momentum. Outreach efforts will result in meaningful participation and input by a broad and balanced variety of public and private interests. Such participation and input in turn will help the BDCP SC make informed and better decisions in pursuing its conservation and water supply planning goals.

Information about Outreach Requirements

The public participation requirement for HCPs is based on NEPA. Since regional HCPs require an EIS, the official public involvement process is initiated when the federal wildlife and fisheries agencies publish a Notice of Intent (NOI) to conduct public scoping in the *Federal Register*. The NOI for the BDCP was published on January 24, 2008 and the comment period ends March 24, 2008. It is typical for the federal wildlife agencies to require a 90-day public comment period for draft HCPs. NEPA also requires public review and comments. Fish agencies respond to public comments from the published NOA in *Federal Register* after 30 days.

The NCCPA requires a public participation "process" as well as a plan for public outreach. There is a clear expectation for early outreach, integration of public values into draft plans, and multiple opportunities for review and comment. All draft documents require a 60-day public review period prior to adoption, and documents must be made available at least 10 working days before public hearings. Although there is a clear expectation related to the process and outreach, the NCCPA does not prescribe any particular methods. The BDCP also will be expected to follow Environmental Justice policies to ensure fair and equitable treatment of people, regardless of race and income level, in the implementation of environmental laws, regulations, and policies related to the BDCP.

Objectives and Strategies:

1. Be accessible

The BDCP SC will ensure that information and participation venues are easily accessible.

- Present material in ways that all audiences can understand the first time they read or hear it.
- Make information easy to find, easy to understand and easy to use to meet all audiences' needs.
- Make sure that information is accurate and in a sufficient level of detail.
- Provide multiple venues for access to information and opportunities for input.
- Take opportunities to inform and educate, especially prior to participation opportunities.

2. Be responsive

To enhance mutual understanding and sustain momentum, the BDCP SC will demonstrate a commitment to providing useful and accurate information.

- Make sure that new and follow-up information is timely.
- Make it easy to ask questions and raise concerns, and ensure a timely and useful reply.
- Show how input was received, compiled, and administered.
- Provide multiple points of contact.
- Encourage public comment to be as specific as possible, rather than a simple expression of satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

3. Be transparent

To demonstrate authenticity and build trust, the SC will ensure that proceedings are open.

- Make sure that appropriate documents are available for public review.
- Make sure that public meetings are easy to participate in.
- Keep detailed records, including public participation opportunities and outcomes.
- Correct any misunderstandings or misrepresentations quickly.
- Present information fairly and objectively.

4. Be comprehensive

The SC will ensure a thorough public participation and outreach program to reach as many audiences and address as many issues as possible.

- Identify audiences and constituencies who may consider themselves to be stakeholders or interested parties.
- Reach out to ensure that proceedings are inclusive of all who have an interest or desire to participate.
- Cover the breadth of topics necessary to be informational, educational, and relevant.

- Make efforts to involve communities with concerns about environmental justice, as well as those who are traditionally underrepresented in conservation planning activities, including tribal governments.
- Utilize multiple and overlapping methods for notification.
- Utilize networking to conduct outreach through useful information conduits.
- Use outreach to address environmental justice by identifying any disproportionately high or adverse impacts on minority or low-income communities.
- Be open to ideas from the public about ways to enhance the public outreach program.

Tactics

These tactics support the objectives and strategies as described above. They are inter-related and as such, elements of one tactic that support others are not repeated.

Information Materials

The BDCP will require a suite of informational materials to fully and accurately describe issues relevant to developing the conservation plan. A set of key messages will be developed early on to help guide standard language (written and verbal) for certain topics. The messages will be updated as necessary to reflect new or changed information. In addition, a standard but simple project identity will be developed to make BDCP materials easily recognizable, including a template for materials and a standard type treatment for *BDCP*. Additional materials will include the following, among others that may be identified in the future:

- Brochure “About the BDCP” discussing how the BDCP is organized, planning goals, covered activities and species, planning area, opportunities for public participation, etc.
- “Leave behind” similar to above but shorter for use with elected officials
- Fact sheet describing the BDCP process, including a description and a graphic of past activities and future plans, with schedule
- Fact sheet describing the purpose and membership of the Independent Science Board
- Newsletter articles
- Update newsletters
- Executive summary for Draft and Final BDCP
- Artistic poster
- Glossary of terms

Public Meetings

There will be several milestones throughout the development of the BDCP that will either require or benefit from public meetings, and which are outlined below as part of a “core” schedule. The Steering Committee may also choose to undertake additional public meetings over the course of the planning process as warranted in order to augment public access. (Note that other activities are planned in between these major milestone meetings in other sections of this plan.) All meeting venues will comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements and will be in locations with convenient access to public transportation and adequate parking. All meetings will be Webcast live on the BDCP Web site and will be archived for future viewing. Note that the details and actual timing for meetings 2 through 5 will be updated based on new information or changed conditions nearer to those meeting dates.

Meeting 1: Introduction to the BDCP. This meeting will, if possible, occur before the end of the scoping comment period as noted in the NOI and the (yet to be published) NOP in order to pursue an integrated NEPA/CEQA process. This meeting will serve as an introduction to the BDCP and include information about the Planning Agreement, Points of Agreement, Independent Science Report, Steering Committee organization and membership, history of how the BDCP was formed, plans for developing the BDCP, and a preliminary project description, etc.

Dates: March ? (TBD)

Locations: Sacramento, Clarksburg, Tracy, Bakersfield, Los Angeles, Fremont, Chico

Participants: Representatives from Resources Agency, Fish agencies, PREs and Environmental organizations, in addition to lead agencies

Structure: Open house, presentation, comments

Other:

- Facilitation team
- A/V to include audio recording of public comments
- Court reporter
- Presentation boards for open house stations
- Translation or other services as requested
- Facilities coordination (location, set-up, refreshments)
- Agenda and program
- FAQs
- Meeting handouts
- Sign in sheets
- Comment cards
- PowerPoint Presentation
- Display boards
- Preparation with meeting staff and presenters
- Meeting summary

Meeting 2: Update Meeting on Biological Goals and Objectives and Impacts Analysis. This meeting will occur in mid to late 2008 to provide progress to date in developing the plan, likely to include an update on development of Chapters 1 through 5, any revisions to covered activities and species and related rationale, existing conditions, conservation strategy options, and initial plans for mitigation. Locations, time, participation, etc. likely will mirror that of meeting 1 but will be determined in planning discussions immediately beforehand.

Meeting 3: Draft Conservation Measures and Alternatives. This meeting will be in the first quarter of 2009 and will provide further updates on development of the plan. It will focus on conservation measures and

alternatives, plus information about cost and funding as well as initial thoughts about the implementation structure. Locations, time, participation, etc. likely will mirror that of meeting 1, but will be determined in planning discussions immediately beforehand.

Meeting 4: Draft EIR/EIS Hearing and Draft BDCP Rollout. This meeting will be in the last quarter of 2009. It will serve as the public hearing on the Draft EIR/EIS and also will present the Draft BDCP, as well as a draft of the Implementation Agreement. Locations, time, participation, etc., likely will mirror that of meeting 1, but will be determined in planning discussions immediately beforehand.

Meeting 5: Final EIR/EIS Hearing and Final BDCP Rollout. This meeting will unveil the Final EIR/EIS as well as the Final BDCP. If each PRE will need to approve the BDCP, this likely would involve a series of presentations at existing PRE board meetings.

Steering Committee Meetings

Steering Committee meetings have been and will continue to be open to the public. These meetings provide timely access to updated information and opportunities for public interaction with SC members and public comment. Public comments and participation will increase as the BDCP progresses. To demonstrate the SC's open approach to public participation and desire to maintain transparency in the BDCP development process, the SC meetings should be able to accommodate larger numbers than past meetings and provide sufficient opportunity for public comment. To facilitate this, the conference call information should be publicized quarterly to the BDCP email list as well as posted on the BDCP Web site. The overflow meeting room location should be publicized and staffed so that comments from the overflow room can be made verbally via the conference line or in writing. Better audio equipment will improve the conference call experience and encourage greater participation by those in the overflow room or those calling from off site. The SC may also want to consider implementing a more formal public comment submittal process, such as formal comment cards that are submitted and responded to at the end of each SC meeting, and then posted on the Web site.

Media

The BDCP SC will use print, broadcast, and internet media in a proactive manner as necessary to facilitate broad distribution of notices related to public participation events and information about the BDCP. The Jones and Stokes team will at the outset assume that it will undertake only a limited support role in reactive media relations only as necessary to correct misinformation and as directed by Steering Committee and its Public Communications Work group. In the event that editorial board briefings, letters-to-the-editor, op-eds or news releases are warranted, the Jones and Stokes team will provide the necessary support as directed. Key messages, as described in collateral materials above, will be used in the event that media outreach is required. Jones and Stokes will assist in the preparation of a media protocol to guide SC and MT members in their interactions with the media related directly to the BDCP.

Distribution Networks

The SC provides a ready-made distribution network to reach potentially interested parties who are SC member constituents. Jones and Stokes will work directly with SC members to assess their ability to participate, and if so to identify contacts within their organizations who can provide assistance in:

- Distributing email announcements to SC member distribution lists.
- Obtaining SC member distribution lists as available.
- Placing relevant announcements or newsletter articles in SC member organization publications. Jones and Stokes will provide the text.
- Linking the BDCP Web site or other Internet-available information on SC member Web sites.
- Identifying potential targets for speakers' bureau presentations.
- Hosting meetings at available SC member organization venues.
- Placing BDCP information at SC member organization booths or other events.

In addition, Jones and Stokes will develop a comprehensive database, including street and email addresses, for use in distributing BDCP information directly. They also will assess the utility of taking advantage of other existing venues (e.g. Delta Vision, BDPAC) to disseminate BDCP information.

Web Site

The BDCP Web site already provides ready access to information for a majority of existing BDCP audiences. To broaden its reach, the BDCP SC may opt for a couple of modifications. For example, the Web site should include information about accessibility by people with disabilities. Other things to consider (in addition to what exists already) include:

- Listing of SC members and other key contacts, including contact information
- Calendar of activities
- Link to sign up for email notices
- Link to submit comments on specific issues or documents
- Information about public participation opportunities
- Information materials, including pdfs of fact sheets, etc.
- A virtual tour of the Delta using Google Earth with photos, graphics and descriptions
- Newsroom to post relevant press coverage, news releases and calendar advisories
- Useful links to other relevant sites

Speakers' Bureau (optional)

While public meetings provide an opportunity for the SC to provide targeted information to a broad group of stakeholders and interested parties, it is impractical to assume too many more public meetings than described above. However, there is a need to continue to provide information and collaborate with the public during the periods between public meetings. Doing so will facilitate ongoing dialogue and will reduce the opportunity for development of misinformation by providing timely updates to targeted audiences. These presentations also will help to educate a broader audience, increase awareness of the BDCP and related issues, and solicit input.

Presentations will be organized by the outreach consultant but will be made by members of the SC or MT as appropriate and supported by the following products:

- Solicitation letter (email)
- Thank you/confirmation letter (email)
- Standard PowerPoint presentation, updated as necessary

- Handouts
- Sign-in sheet
- Presentation poster boards (or traveling tabletop display)
- Thank you/follow up letter (email)

Schedule

January & February 2008	Conduct research and interviews; finalize outreach plan
February & March 2008	Prepare for scoping meetings; develop initial products (About the BDCP, etc.)
March 2008	Host Intro-to-the-BDCP meeting; develop Web site, key messages, media protocol
April 2008	Follow up on any action items or other inquiries post-scoping meeting; develop and distribute scoping report
April to July 2008	Update Web site, launch speakers' bureau, remaining collateral, distribution networks, newsletter articles; broaden database
August & September 2008	Prepare for meeting #2; update collateral
September 2008	Host meeting #2
October to December 2009	Speakers' bureau, distribution networks, newsletter articles; update collateral, responsive media outreach; prepare for meeting #3
February, 2009	Host meeting #3
March to November 2009	Speakers bureau; distribution networks; newsletter articles; update collateral, responsive media outreach
October & November 2009	Prepare for meeting #4
December 2009	Meeting #4 (Draft EIR/EIS hearing, rollout of Draft BDCP)
March 2010	Final EIR/EIS hearing and Final BDCP rollout

Measurement and Evaluation

Evaluation of a public outreach program can be accomplished by looking at both the outreach process and outcomes.

1. Process: to evaluate the process used to implement public outreach and participation, the BDCP SC will quantify the number of people reached, the number of people who participate, and the number of comments received. This will include a demographic analysis of participation and feedback. The SC also will evaluate whether all the elements of the outreach plan were implemented and how this implementation contributed to the outcome.

-
2. Outcome: to evaluate the outcome, the SC will evaluate the types of public interactions and comments received, including their usefulness in the process.

Roles and Responsibilities

BDCP Communications Co-chairs and Management Team: Direct the work of the outreach consultant, assist in the implementation of strategies and tasks, review work products on an as needed basis, and assist the Communications Subcommittee in the execution of its assignments and responsibilities, as directed by the SC.

Communications Sub-committee: Formulate recommendations on overall strategies and approaches on public outreach to recommend to the SC; review work products and materials and formulate recommendations to the SC. Provide tactical assistance in disseminating information via SC distribution networks.

Steering Committee: Provide final review of work products and assistance in disseminating information via each member's distribution networks.

Jones & Stokes: Manage public outreach program. Advance tasks and monitor progress. Develop, revise, produce and distribute work products. Take direction from the SC and the Communications Subcommittee and its co-chairs, as appropriate.

Other Consultant Activities

The BDCP SC expects Jones & Stokes to coordinate on a regular basis with the SAIC technical team, as well as CEQA/NEPA/NCCPA staff to ensure that the content of the public outreach materials is consistent with the BDCP and the approach is consistent with expectations. All J&S activities will be authorized on a task order basis.

Jones & Stokes will use an Internet-based file management program called SharePoint. Through the SharePoint site, the MT, Sub-committee and SC will have access to all draft and final documents, contact information, calendars, and other information necessary for the effective implementation of the outreach program. The site will be password-protected to restrict access to only the Steering Committee. Public files will be maintained on the BDCP public Web site.